

Q&A From the Bais HaVaad Halacha Hotline

Eat and Run

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Q I am at a wedding. If I stay for *zimun* and *sheva brachos*, I will miss my *shiur*. May I *bentch* and leave early?

A Wedding guests are obligated to *bentch* with a *zimun* of ten. According to some, they are also obligated to hear the *sheva brachos*. But the Mishnah Brurah (193:16), speaking generally about one who ate with a minyan but must leave early for a mitzvah, writes that he may make a *zimun* with just three. If even that cannot be done, he may forgo the *zimun* and go do his mitzvah (Mishnah Brurah 200:5). The Shoshanas Yisrael says this applies even at a wedding, when leaving early will cause him to miss *sheva brachos*. When *bentching* with a *zimun* of three, some say to recite the *bracha* of *asher bara* after *bentching*, but that is not the prevalent custom. Some say that the *zimun* should include *shehasimcha vim'ono*, but the common custom is otherwise (Lev Ita).

If one knows in advance that he will need to leave before the public *zimun* and *sheva brachos*, he should preferably start his meal before or after the others. Because he neither starts nor ends his meal together with the group, he incurs no obligation of *zimun*. Alternatively, he may eat his first *kezayis* in a different room from the other guests. Another option (per Igros Moshe O.C. 1:56) is to have in mind when beginning the meal that he is not joining the group.

